

Chicopee Register

All women fire crew empowers next generation

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

News of an accomplishment spread quickly through the city after three female firefighters formed the Chicopee Fire Department's first all-women crew on Jan. 17.

Lt. Dina Brunetti and firefighters Kirsten Therrien and Val Stein made history and appreciate the recognition that they've received in the months that followed their appointment to Station No. 7 in Aldenville.

All the while, each woman endeavors to be remembered for more. The three firefighters have assumed the roles of pioneers as they attempt to empower young women locally and beyond.

"I really hope that we can get to that point where it's just the norm. It would be nice some day to have a balance of gender [in the department]. I don't want women to feel like they can't [be firefighters] because they absolutely can," said Stein, who split time between Pittsfield and South Carolina growing up.

Stein was motivated to become a firefighter by those who said that she couldn't, simply because she was a female. Brunetti overcame similar opposition and shared an important message.

"Yes, I can drag a



"That would be the goal; if 15 or 20 years from now it's the norm for females to be firefighters. We don't see black, we don't see white, we don't see male and we don't see female. You're just a firefighter in uniform who is giving exactly what the next person is giving."

- Lt. Dina Brunetti,
Chicopee Fire Department

Posing with Fire Chief Daniel Stamborski (second from left) firefighters Valeri Stein, Kirsten Therrien and Lt. Dina Brunetti hope to inspire young women to follow in their paths and chase their dreams regardless. The first all-women crew is stationed at the Aldenville Station.

200-pound man. Yes, I've been in fires. Yes, I took the same test as the men. Strong doesn't always matter. Intelligence does. There's different elements of firefighting, and it's not all about the old days of kicking in windows and breaking down doors and throwing people over

your shoulder," said Brunetti, an officer at Station No. 7.

Therrien grew up in Putnam, Connecticut, before attending Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley. As a college student, she became an emergency medical technician; at the encouragement of her

father, a volunteer firefighter, Therrien followed in his footsteps.

Therrien acknowledged that she was fortunate to be raised by a firefighter. Many young women don't consider

See FIRE page 11

COMMUNITY

Club launches virtual programming during pandemic

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

Next week, the Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee will launch its newly-created virtual programming package, allowing members to partake in art and STEM projects, fitness exercises, cooking and a number of other fun activities.

The vast majority of the club's staff is working from home; employees are either training, conducting day-to-day business or creating new online content. Communicating with the children and teens who call the club home is equally important.

"We've started a parent newsletter that goes out once a week with any updates and helpful tips, activities and recipes. The staff has created signs of positivity and well wishes that we have been posting on our Facebook page," said Lynn Morrisette, marketing and development director.

Next Tuesday, the club will launch its grab-and-go dinner program. Meals will be distributed at the club every



Yellow caution tape wards off the playscape behind the Boys and Girls Club of Chicopee. Steel surfaces are not to be touched during the coronavirus pandemic.

Tuesday and Thursday from 4 to 6 p.m. for the foreseeable future.

"This will be offered to all of our members and their siblings in their household. Information will be available on our website by the end of the week," said Morrisette on April 22.

Fortunately, the club was able to keep the entirety of its staff on payroll. While all

employees must work remotely, several staff members still have limited access to the club, which is located at 520 Mead-ow St.

"A few staff members are in the building periodically to check on the facility, continue with cleaning and sanitizing, and handle any other Club business," said Morrisette. "Staff maintain social distancing and we limit the number

of staff in the building at any one time. Before we re-open, a full deep cleaning will take place with direction from the Department of Early Education and Care."

Morrisette stated that club personnel are "maintaining frequent contact with city leaders to ensure we are following all of the recommended

See CLUB page 8



BBB

Officials warn of scams during pandemic

See Page 2



OPINION

Washing away life's mix-ups

See Page 4



CITY HALL

Mayor, Health Dept. order facial coverings

See Page 5



SPORTS

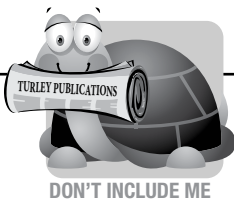
Summer soccer league optimistic for season

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Counting
turtles



We would love to give you or your kids a fun little project each week.

Find **TURLEY** (the turtle) our new mascot within the paper. Have fun and count how many times you find Turley.

Email your results along with your name, town and turtle count from what paper to tyler@turley.com.

We will post your name and count in the following weeks paper.

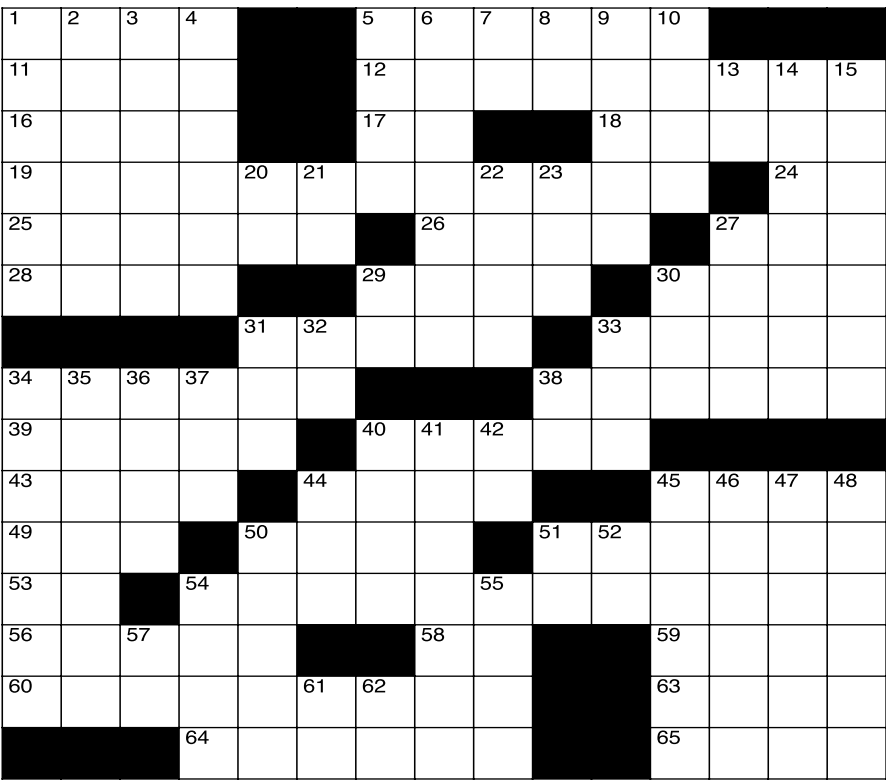
Correct answers will be submitted for a monthly drawing and a chance to win a prize.

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- CLUES ACROSS**

 - 1. Curved symmetrical structure
 - 5. One's partner in marriage
 - 11. Male admirer
 - 12. Spend in a period of dormancy
 - 16. Popular Easter meal
 - 17. Doc
 - 18. Bearing a heavy load
 - 19. Gratitude
 - 24. The Mount Rushmore State
 - 25. Driving
 - 26. Girl
 - 27. British thermal unit
 - 28. Makes a mistake
 - 29. A defined length of time
 - 30. Lions do it
 - 31. Large quantities
 - 33. Become less intense
 - 34. Famed peninsula
 - 38. Emerges
 - 39. Rare Hawaiian geese
- 40. Dance style
 - 43. Drove
 - 44. Measures speed of an engine (abbr.)
 - 45. Yankee hero Bucky
 - 49. Midway between west and northwest
 - 50. Monetary unit of Samoa
 - 51. Makes clothing
 - 53. Spielberg's alien
 - 54. Agreeable to the taste
 - 56. Injury treatment protocol
 - 58. Cools your house
 - 59. Imaginary line
 - 60. New convert
 - 63. Some do it to their windows
 - 64. Wore away
 - 65. Work units
- CLUES DOWN**

 - 1. Remove body tissue
 - 2. Harvester
 - 3. Roadside living quarters
 - 4. Excessive self-confidence
 - 5. Lapp
 - 6. Bicycled
 - 7. Entrance to a passage
 - 8. Western U.S. state
 - 9. Grain towers
 - 10. "Westworld" actress
 - 13. Commercial
 - 14. One who left a will
 - 15. Makes it through
 - 20. Within (prefix)
 - 21. Sea patrol (abbr.)
 - 22. Cigarettes (slang)
 - 23. A doctrine
 - 27. Constrictor snakes
 - 29. Atomic #73
 - 30. Baseball stat
 - 31. Female sibling
 - 32. A soft gray metal (abbr.)
 - 33. Southern constellation
 - 34. Belgian city
 - 35. Go in again
 - 36. In a different, more positive way
 - 37. A place for sleeping
 - 38. Blood type
 - 40. Syrian news agency (abbr.)
 - 41. A salt or ester of acetic acid
 - 42. Millihenry
 - 44. Populous Israeli city
 - 45. Widen
 - 46. Magical potion
 - 47. Acknowledging
 - 48. Private romantic rendezvous
 - 50. Cavalry sword
 - 51. Terabyte
 - 52. Artificial intelligence
 - 54. Bullfighting maneuver
 - 55. Breezed through
 - 57. Santa says it three times
 - 61. ___ and behold
 - 62. 36 inches (abbr.)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 8

Online scams capitalize on pandemic paranoia

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

As if the spread of COVID-19 wasn't bad enough on its own, scammers around the world are taking advantage of the widespread paranoia that surrounds the ongoing health crisis. Online fraud has not only rocketed during the pandemic; it's taken on new forms.

Nancy Cahalen, president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Central New England, reported that online scams "popped up almost immediately," in March as states across the country implemented unforeseen guidelines to flatten the curve of the novel coronavirus.

Both international and domestic scammers are preying on the fears of the masses. Cahalen elaborated on the evolution of online fraud that she's personally witnessed over the past two months.

"They're becoming more sophisticated, and there's more scams now that are targeted at businesses as well. Scammers read the headlines just like we do and like to freshen up their old scams to make them more credible and



PHOTO COURTESY BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Nancy Cahalen, president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Central New England, offers advice to stay up to date on the latest forms of online fraud.

have a better chance at succeeding," said Cahalen.

The BBB Scam Tracker monitors instances of online fraud throughout the country. Cahalen and her peers use the technology to identify local scams that attack residents and businesses in Central and Western Massachusetts and northeastern Connecticut.

When concerns over COVID-19 first surfaced earlier this year, the BBB identified scams that sold victims items that are in short supply, including latex gloves, sanitizer or masks, without delivering the goods.

"The end game there was to get consumers to provide their personal information or payment to use somewhere else," said Cahalen.

Other scams attempt to sell consumers cures and vaccines for COVID-19. When approached, consumers should immediately dismiss this method of online fraud, noted Cahalen.

"There is no cure and no vaccine currently so anything that someone is trying to sell you that says it is a cure is just not true," she said.

Trickier forms of online fraud have also become prevalent. Many scammers are playing off of the economic impact and stimulus payments that millions of Americans have or are about to receive to reel in unsuspecting victims. By mailing fake checks or sending texts and emails requesting personal identification and payment, scammers endeavor only to learn a victim's personal identification and bank account information.

"[Scammers] could be looking for this information such as, 'Where do we deposit our checks? You're not going to get a text and email from the U.S. government to find out where to deposit the stimulus check. Hang up if they're calling, delete if it's a text or an email and you'll stay safe from that particular scam," said Cahalen.

Various forms of online fraud attempt to mimic the U.S. government or well-known businesses. These scams often offer fake employment opportunities and require down payments on the spot.

Using photo editing

software, scammers are easily able to make emails and logos look "pretty authentic," said Cahalen. She reiterated that the government will never email or text you and urged victims to research a business' contact information separately from the emails that they receive.

"If you're not sure, give us a call," said Cahalen. "This environment has made it even better for those scammers because there are so many people who are looking for work from home. What can they do to earn some money? There are a lot of phony opportunities out there."

Cahalen reminded residents that anyone can start a GoFundMe page to collect donations under false pretenses. The website give.org allows individuals to look up charities to "make sure they're on the up and up."

Relying on trusted sources is a major key in the fight against online fraud. Now more than ever, financial matters are often too important to risk making a mistake.

"The most important thing is if it doesn't sound right to you, you should really check it out," said Cahalen, before circling back to a significant point.

"People want to believe the best; that there is something they can take that will cure them or protect them from catching the virus. What we do know is that there are no known cures, and there are no vaccines that are currently available," she said.

The BBB and its Scam Tracker technology can be accessed online at bbb.org. The local office of the BBB is available by phone Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. by dialing 508-755-3340.

Counting
Turtles

Did you find Turley the Turtle in last week's edition of the Chicopee Register? Turley appeared 12 times.

Here are the official reader submissions: **Steve Curylo**, Chicopee: 11

Camille Lytwyn, East Longmeadow: 10

Steven Lytwyn, East Longmeadow: 10

Katie Marcinkowski, Chicopee: 10

Be sure to look hard in this week's paper! Email your count along with your name and town of residence by noon on Monday to tyler@turley.com.



Share your stories of
staying at home

The Chicopee Register wants to know how you're coping with the coronavirus closures and how they've changed all of our lives — no school, no work, social distancing and staying at home.

We can't meet our neighbors in the schoolyards, playing fields or workplaces, but we can all share a few snapshots of what life's like with the kids in the house and the home office working overtime. Take a minute to send in an update on how you're doing, what fun enrichment activities the kids have been up to, or anything else that's made the past two weeks a special time in your home. Include full names

of the writer or photographer, and anyone visible in each photo. We'll print the best entries in next week's newspaper, and in subsequent weeks as the state of emergency continues. The best way to contact us is at tyler@turley.com.

We would also be glad to publish children's artwork, essays or photos created during the school closure. Include the creator's full name, age, and school attended.

For all submissions, also include a telephone number and email address. We won't publish this information, but may use it to verify identities or ask follow-up questions.

Stay safe out and let us know how you're doing!

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Local group mobilizes in support of health care workers

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

A pandemic comes with no positives, but the COVID-19 outbreak has, at the very least, rekindled the creative spirits of countless residents.

This newfound sense of ingenuity is best represented by RVs for Healthcare Heroes MA, a community group that is lending RVs to health care workers who must self-isolate.

The group of volunteers is working in conjunction with Baystate Health. Organizer Keith Clancy explained how the initiative works.

“We’re reaching out and finding RVs to be [temporarily] donated to employees who are exposed to COVID-19 on a daily basis. Their concern is what they’re bringing home to their families. This helps them safeguard their family members

who are at a significant risk,” said Clancy.

Many of the individuals that the program assists live with children or elderly family members who are significantly vulnerable to the novel coronavirus. Baystate Health provides Clancy with a list of individuals who are in need of temporary housing, and the community group locates available RVs.

The process is entirely confidential, and only limited personal information is required to participate.

Clancy is aware that lending one’s RV to an individual who might have COVID-19 is no easy ask. He complimented the benefactors who have thus far contributed to the program.

“It’s amazing; the fact that these people are stepping up and helping out, which we’re using as our tagline. They are entrusting these people with significant assets because it’s the right thing to

do. Their generosity cannot be put into words. Our gratefulness can’t be put into words,” said Clancy.

Each RV is professionally sanitized before being returned to its rightful owner. Clancy listed several of the other steps that must be taken to complete the difficult but worthwhile process of lending a Baystate employee an RV for two weeks.

“We have to consider many things; there’s a lot of moving pieces,” he said. “When you set up an RV in someone’s driveway, you have to get the clearances through the town and exemptions to any by-laws and things of that nature. We also need to be sure that the septic is taken care of; we have entities that will come in and pump out the grey and black water twice a week.”

Individuals who are interested in lending an RV can find more information

on the group’s website rvsforhealthcareheroes.org. Those who want to help but don’t own an RV can still contribute in a variety of ways such as installing propane, wiring electricity or completing plumbing.

Several local sponsors have pitched into the endeavor; among them are Xheight Studios, Osterman Propane, Whitely Septic Service, Salem Cross Inn Restaurant and Tavern and King Ward Coach Lines, which has offered a lot to house the colossal vehicles.

“Some of these locations don’t have space for an RV,” said Clancy. “You can’t put a camper in the driveway; it’s just not going to happen. King Ward Coach Lines has offered space within their secure facility with 24-hour video surveillance, lighting, electricity, water and all that for potentially up to 30 RVs with the appropriate spacing to self isolate.”

Advocates concerned with longstanding problems at Soldiers’ Home

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE — The halls of the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke have served as the final battleground for more than 70 veterans stricken by COVID-19, who have lost their lives over the past 40 days.

The facility has drawn the ire of many due to the spread of the highly contagious COVID-19 that overwhelmed the facility. As of April 27, there were 83 residents and 81 employees fighting the novel coronavirus.

Several individuals close to the situation are adamant the tragedy was avoidable. Veterans’ organizations had reportedly been requesting more funding and additional staffing long before the outbreak.

“When this happened, they couldn’t have been prepared for it. There were too many men sharing the same bathrooms; too many men in the same room. They didn’t have enough staff, and when staff got sick and couldn’t show up, they didn’t have any reserves,” said Steve Connor, director of the Central Hampshire Veterans’ Services.

Funding

Alongside the families of residents, Connor has advocated for the facility to get additional resources, noting staff was reduced in 2015. The building’s former superintendent, Paul Barabani, pushed hard to improve conditions before subsequently being pushed into retirement himself in December 2015, said Connor.

Others share a different narrative. From fiscal 2015 to fiscal 2020, the facility’s funding was increased by 14 percent and the average amount spent on each resident increased by 11 percent, said Brooke Karanovich, representing the home as part of the state’s Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

It is also Karanovich’s understanding that em-

ployees who retired in 2015 were able to do so as part of the early retirement incentive program, a statewide program that wasn’t specific to the Soldiers’ Home.

“It was a statewide offer that was made to state employees who met certain criteria to be eligible. They could choose to retire early and get some sort of extra benefit,” said Karanovich.

In the meantime, Superintendent Bennett Walsh has come under fire since being placed on administrative leave effective March 30. His responsibilities have temporarily been assumed by Val Liptak, RN, currently the CEO of Western Massachusetts Hospital.

Karanovich emphasized disciplinary action against Walsh has not yet been taken, and several investigations remain ongoing.

On April 1, Gov. Charlie Baker launched an investigation and Attorney General Maura Healey announced an investigation about a week later. A federal investigation was also launched by U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling on April 10.

Walsh’s Termination

Brian Willette, South Hadley resident and state commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, believes Walsh has unfairly become the public face of the incident after inheriting a flawed operation.

“As far as I’m concerned, Bennett Walsh is the second superintendent in a row to ask for help from the state and not receive it,” said Willette.

Walsh maintained he alerted the state after the first Soldiers’ Home resident tested positive on March 21, but Baker said he was not notified until well afterwards, sparking the investigations.

Without declaring Walsh’s innocence outright, Willette lent the man his support. Willette and his peers have a personal connection to the facil-



ity; the Soldiers’ Home has served as a meeting ground for the Military Order of the Purple Heart since 2013, and a number of members reside in the home.

“At this very moment, there are several investigations going on. We need to see the results of those investigations. Simultaneously, the trustees are working to fire the current superintendent, I feel without due process,” said Willette.

Willette alleges that Soldiers’ Home trustees endeavored to fire Walsh, but a court-issued restraining order delayed the process until at least next month. Acknowledging the court action, Karanovich denies that the trustees attempted to execute Walsh’s termination.

Connor, on the other hand, believes Walsh never should have been given the job to begin with. Connor, who is responsible for enrolling veterans in the home, recalls being immediately alarmed when Walsh assumed the position following Barabani’s departure.

“The reality was that he didn’t have any background in running a facility,” said Connor. “He was a proud Marine who served very honorably, but never ran a facility like this. He came in under those circumstances [of staffing reductions], which kind of made me worried. Over the couple of years that have followed, staffing has continued to be an issue.”

To express his dismay, Connor released a memo in

2017 to outline the “concerns of veterans, their family members and the staff of the Holyoke Soldiers’ Home and the members of the Western Massachusetts Veterans Service Officers Association.”

The document continued to note that “the major concern that has been brought to our attention, is for the health and safety of the veterans who live there.” The memo highlights issues such as poor staffing, an ineffective governing structure and lackluster conditions inside of the facility.

Employee compensation and staffing

Employee compensation has also been seemingly problematic. In 2017, the staff of the Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke was paid \$40,727 on-average while employees at the Chelsea Soldiers’ Home earned an annual salary of \$66,638.

The difference of more than \$25,000 is representative of the Holyoke facility’s lack of “skilled nurses,” according to the report and may have contributed to the recent outbreak. Connors believes that many families have been afraid to voice complaints because the state might shutter the facility.

“From everything that I’ve heard from the nurses and the families in there, it was already bad. Having this [outbreak] happen only amplified it,” said Connor. “It’s really been an ongoing problem; the staffing level, the morale and the staff having to work forced overtime.”

Prior to the outbreak, Connor met with a number of local and state legislators to discuss the issue. Willette too is adamant there has been a history of understaffing and underfunding at the Soldiers’ Home.

“There’s a need for more assistance up there; there’s a need for more money, more staffing, better housing conditions and they’ve known that,” said Willette. “From the veterans organizations’ perspective, this is what we fight for; staffing and funding. With staffing shortages, they cannot properly care for these veterans. Does that mean a bigger budget? Yes, it does.”

Last month, it took multiple days for the public to be informed the first Soldiers’ Home residents had succumbed to COVID-19. Connor was in the building that week to complete a charitable endeavor; he explained what haunts him most about how the incident unfolded.

“While I was there, two veterans were given farewells going out in the hearse. When they go out, so do all of the nurses and all of the staff. When it was unknown that veter-

ans were dying that first weekend in March, I heard about it from friends and said, ‘Well how would nobody know that?’ Then it came out that there was a refrigerator truck in the back of the building,” said Connor.

“Nothing could have done more to hurt the families and all the veterans to know that because always they go out with honors out the front door,” he said. “They even play taps. It just was such a heartbreaking thing that they had gone out the backdoor and put in a refrigerator truck.”

Connor considers the building’s employees to be courageous and thanked them for their tireless effort and commitment to local veterans. He acknowledged that, like front line responders across the country, they have performed admirably amid dangerous circumstances.

It will take years for the Soldiers’ Home to fully rebound from the outbreak that has occurred within its walls; Connor noted that approximately 25 percent of the residents are now dead.

He did voice optimism that the building will rise from the ashes and serve veterans for many more years to come.

“It’s always been the gem on the hill here for us in Western Mass.; it’s now not that, but it can be again if people just pay attention and support it the way that it needs to be supported,” he said. “There’s going to be a long time of recovery, and we need to keep an eye on it so this never happens again.”

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EDITORIAL

Take charge to prevent electrical fires

Time continues to surge ahead and with many spending an increasing amount of time at home, connecting with customers, co-workers or the classroom, fire officials statewide urge folks to take extra caution to prevent electrical fires.

May is "Electrical Safety Month." According to information from the Division of Fire Services and the office of State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, electrical fires caused 39 deaths and nearly \$200 million in damages between 2014 and 2018. During that time, Massachusetts fire departments reported 2,794 electrical fires. There were 355 fire service injuries and 92 civilians injured as a result.

While faulty wiring can lead to electrical fires, there are steps individuals can take to reduce the risk a fire can start in their homes. This starts with learning the warning signs of a fire, such as sparks, arcs or short circuits. Sizzling sounds, buzzing, as well as the smell of something burning are also indicators of an electrical fire. Call the fire department immediately if any of these occur in the home.

Many fires are caused by cellphones charging beneath pillows and laptops left running on top of bed sheets. These devices are always processing when running or charging. Blocking or covering them can prevent air from cooling the batteries and lead to a fire. Failures of the lithium ion batteries typically used in these devices are more likely to occur during recharging. These devices should be charged on a hard surface.

Overloading electrical circuits can lead to short circuits and sparking. Folks should take care not to plug too many devices or appliances into any one outlet or circuit, especially with extension cords. Extension cords are for temporary use and are not designed as a substitute for the wall outlet. They should also never be linked together, as each connection is a potential failure point. Heat-producing appliances like space heaters, irons and toasters should always be plugged directly into the wall outlet, to prevent bypassing the safety mechanisms built into fuses and circuit breakers.

Folks should inspect the cords of appliances and extension cords prior to use and avoid using any with cracks and kinks. Heavy furniture can easily pinch an electrical cord and over time that can lead to a fire. Do not run cords underneath rugs; it is both a trip and a fire hazard. Unplug appliances by grasping the plug; do not pull by the cord.

Perhaps most importantly, use a licensed electrician to install appliances and fixtures, and have the system checked at least every 10 years. Folks should call an electrician if they notice dimming lights or bulbs that wear unusually fast, frequently blown fuses, overheated cords or switches, loose outlets and shocks or mild tingles.

More information is available online at mass.gov/service-details/electrical-fire-safety.

"We are using more electronic devices at once than normal," Ostroskey said. "Practicing electrical safety is more important now than ever."

As individuals and communities, this May and every day, we can all take charge and do our part to prevent an electrical fire.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources.

Send letters to: **The Chicopee Register**,
24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069
or email chicopeeregister@turley.com.
The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon.

GUEST COLUMN

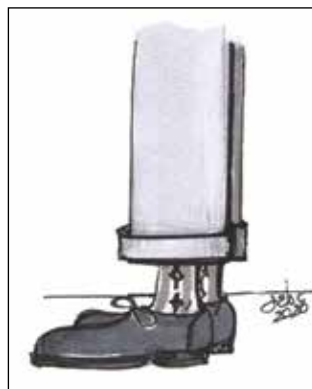
When it all came out in the wash

Can innocence work along with ignorance? As a young wife and mother of two active children under 5-years-of-age, lessons were learned amid simple, everyday chores such as laundry.

Could washable, gray business dress slacks hang out somewhere in the category of lessons learned? Unimpressive. Well, then, could it be that a tall man's gray business suit slacks, requiring professional dry cleaning — were left high and dry?

Once upon a time, a young wife and mother of two active children under five years of age, was asked to participate in several creative tests and recorded interviews by her friend Lois, who was completing her Master's Degree in Psychology.

What was the topic for



ARTWORK BY JOAN E. B. COOMBS

this session? Perhaps, this time, the interview was about some of the normal, everyday events that contribute to leaping through life on the home front. If memory recalls correctly, one of the most memorable interviews went something like this:

"As a young wife and mother, what were some of your most challenging mo-

ments this week?"

"Tackling loads of laundry."

"Hmm. Why was that routine job so rough?"

"Had to separate mountains of wash into colored, dark, and white piles."

"Umm. Triple duty. Do you have a dryer? Or do you have to hang laundry outside?"

"Yup. Sure do! We've got a dandy dryer." And, the young mother of two active children under 5-years-of-age muffled her giggles.

The Interviewer abruptly stopped as the Interviewee nearly collapsed with laughter. The Counselor-to-be stopped the recording. Finding the giggles contagious, she asked,

"What's so funny about

See **LAUNDRY** page 5



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

An open message to the community

To the editor:

Throughout COVID-19 as always, West-Mass ElderCare is here for you.

As the COVID-19 crisis continues to impact our community, WMEC is more committed than ever to protecting the health and safety of our consumers, their caregivers and our staff. We continue to provide our essential services every day to safeguard those who are most vulnerable in our community, modifying our service methods as needed to ensure that we are doing so in the safest possible way.

Although we've closed our office to visitors in keeping with public health advisories, WMEC's staff are available telephonically and have continued to take new referrals and clients daily. Our staff is available Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

We are actively responding to the needs of our clients and delivering services in the safest way possible throughout this evolving situation. For example:

- Our Meals on Wheels program has begun services to over 400 new clients since the COVID-19 outbreak began. Our nutrition staff and delivery drivers wear masks and gloves, and follow strict social distancing protocols to protect their health and that of our consumers.
- WMEC Care Managers provide fre-

quent telephonic support and phone "check-ins" for all program consumers to respond to their needs.

- WMEC Nursing Staff conduct telephonic assessments to closely monitor their consumers' physical and mental health.

- Many in home services have been altered to "contactless" methods (laundry/grocery pick up/drop off); all of our direct care staff are trained and are using precautions and protective equipment when in-person services are required.

As always, to reduce the risk of spreading the virus and help "flatten the curve," we advise all community members to follow the guidance of the state's Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control throughout the duration of the COVID-19 outbreak.

If you or someone you know needs our services, please call us!

We are here to answer your questions and listen to your concerns, ready to provide the services you need now and in the future. Contact WMEC staff at 413-538-9020 or email info@wmeldercare and let us know how we can help.

Sara Aasheim

Director of Community Programs
WestMass ElderCare
Holyoke

WE CARE ABOUT YOUR NEWS!

The *Chicopee Register* welcomes submissions of news in or related to Chicopee and its residents. Our "People News," is filled with submitted engagement announcements, wedding announcements, birth announcements, your new baby or news about your 25th or 50th anniversary celebrations. Please e-mail correspondence along with a photo to chicopeeregister@turley.com or send it to: Chicopee Register, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

Chicopee Register

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City orders face coverings to be worn while shopping

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

The outbreak of COVID-19 has forced the hands of municipalities throughout the commonwealth, and a wave of necessary but unforeseen orders has greeted residents at every unexpected turn.

Last Friday, the Chicopee Department of Health mandated that residents must don “face-coverings” before entering any of the city’s operating, essential businesses. The order commenced Monday, April 27, and full compliance is expected.

“Life has to go on, but it has to go on safely. This face-covering order can help protect vulnerable people at home, at work, and when out gathering the essentials to bring home,” said Mayor John Vieau.

Northampton implemented a similar policy on April 15 and Chicopee’s Board of Health quickly followed suit. Vieau explained that the novel coronavirus is “primarily transmitted through tiny droplets of saliva ejected when we speak,” a reality that made last week’s decision fairly easy.

Vieau shared that “it took less than a few hours to get everyone on board with this order.” Both the Board of Health and Chicopee Police Department urge residents to adhere to the policy; both entities will resort to fines to enforce the order if necessary.

As part of the order, businesses must provide masks or face-coverings to employees and deny entry to customers that refuse to wear them. Individuals who are uncomfortable wearing masks are asked to use alternative means such as contact-free delivery services to acquire items.

When looking for reasons to wear a mask, one must first think of others. COVID-19 can take up to 14 days for symptoms to appear, and asymptomatic residents can sicken others without being aware that they possess the virus.

A small contingent of city folk have criticized the order, claiming that it denies their basic rights. Vieau acknowledges their opinions, but isn’t straying from his belief that the mask policy will save lives.

“We understand that people may doubt the need to wear a mask if a loved one has not contracted the virus or they do not know someone who passed away from contracting the virus. While wearing a mask cannot protect you completely from contracting this virus it does aid in preventing the spread of the disease as we manage the surge of infections,” said Vieau.

While the majority of masks do not provide total protection, they can be expected to block out the large droplets that are produced by others coughing or sneezing. At the same time, facial coverings prevent asymptomatic residents from spreading the virus by coughing or sneezing.

“The biggest challenge is that



Those shopping in Chicopee for essential goods during the COVID-19 pandemic are required to wear a cloth face covering like these homemade masks, following orders from the Health Department and Mayor John Vieau.

mask-wearing only really pays off when most people do it,” said Vieau. “A single person wearing a mask may not seem like there is that big a need but if everyone is wearing a mask then maybe it will hit home that we are in a pandemic so that people will behave with the level of caution required for this battle to flatten the curve.”

In addition to wearing a mask inside of local businesses, residents are asked to remain at least six-feet apart whenever possible. If you are concerned that you

are sick, stay home.

Since the outbreak established itself Chicopee in March, Vieau has sung the praises of his constituents. Witnessing residents and local businesses step up to challenge after challenge has left him invigorated.

“These community members are just one more reason I am proud to lead this fine City during such a tumultuous time,” said Vieau.

In accordance to the order, all masks and face-coverings must “fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, be secured with ties or ear loops, include multiple layers of fabric, allow for breathing without restriction and be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape,” wrote Health Director Lisa Sanders.

Items such as but not limited to scarves, bandanas and turtlenecks that securely cover a resident’s face will be permitted.

Residents are asked not to act as an “enforcement authority” for the city and are instead advised not to approach others who may be in violation of the order.

The recently released order does not eliminate the six-foot social distance requirement. Neither does it force residents to cover their face in an environment where social distancing can be maintained and ensured.

For more information contact the Health Department at 594-3557.

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF SALE

By Ma. Gen Laws c.255, Sec. 39A, **CHUCK’S TOWING 78 West St., Chicopee, MA** is holding a private sale of a vehicle **May 14, 2020 at 2:00 PM** to satisfy garage keepers lien for storage and towing charges and expenses of notices of sale.

2006 BMW 525 XI
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Owner: Michael Sullivan
Date of Tow: 11-26-18
2008 Infiniti G35
VIN# JNKBV61F58M279819
Owner: Ginette M. Varges
Co-Owner: Steven Morales
Date of Tow: 9-22-18
4/23 4/30 5/7/2020

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES Under G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A
Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on **May 15, 2020 at Interstate Towing, Inc** the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper’s lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

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Whitinsville, MA 01588

2007 CHEVROLET AVEO
VIN: KL1TD56677B124640
Brian Reyes
152 Plainfield St
Springfield, MA 01104

2001 FORD FLEX
VIN: 2FMGK5CC8BBD04718
Mia Carroll
4787 Nermont Place
Gary, Indiana 46409
4/30, 5/07, 5/14/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-8600 Docket No. HD20P0639EA Estate of: Catherine C. LaCroix Also Known As: Catherine Claire LaCroix Date of Death: April 24, 2017 NOTICE OF INFORMAL PROBATE

G.L. c. 190B, § 3-306
To all persons who have or may have some interest in the above-captioned estate and, if interested, to the Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Veterans Affairs, notice is hereby given on 3/6/2020 that the Petitioner **Gerald L. LaCroix** of Chicopee, MA intends to file with the

above-named Probate and Family Court, not sooner than seven (7) days after this notice, a

Petition for Informal Probate of a Will
Petition for Informal Appointment of Personal Representative, to serve **without surety** on the bond **Gerald L. LaCroix** of Chicopee, MA

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 4/30/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD20P0649EA Estate of: Nora M Laferriere Date of Death: 01/31/2020 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Theresa Vieu** of Chicopee MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Theresa Vieu** of Chicopee MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in an **unsupervised** administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court

before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/14/2020.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 16, 2020
Suzanne T. Seguin
Register of Probate
4/30/2020

LAUNDRY from page 4

your dryer?” Putting down her pen, pushing aside her notes, Lois asked, “What happened?”

“I washed, dried, folded the laundry and put it away. Then I hung the clothes that didn’t need ironing in bedroom closets.”

“And ...”

“Well — by all appearances — when The Hub grabbed his business suit ... Well, the matching gray pants were washed and dried in the dryer instead of being dry cleaned ...”

Gasp. Silence. Then table-slapping, rib-holding, heads-back laughter rocked the room.

Sheepishly the young wife and mother of two active children under 5-years-of-age continued: “I honestly didn’t realize my mistake — even when I hung the slacks up in the closet. Umm. He must not have realized it either, especially during the early morning hours.”

“Until ...”

“When my well-over six-feet-tall hubby got dressed for work, he didn’t notice anything unusual. But, when I saw him-- his pant leg cuffs were above ankles. ”

Giggles. Breath-bursting laughter. Trickling tears. Motherhood. Sisterhood.

Lost for words, the young wife and mother of two active children under 5-years-of-age, wasn’t sure how to explain the mix-up. The problem of distinguishing, (amid chasing children and chores), between the washable permanent-press, light-gray slacks, and the dry-clean-only, light gray business suit slacks. And, yet, as always, The Hub understood.

Yet, somehow the Interviewer and the Interviewee, both being young mothers, understood how lessons and laughter can erupt from committing acts with innocence and ignorance. And, even with laundry mix-ups — the truth being told — that undeniable evidence showed up when it all came out in the wash.

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Elms College postpones commencement ceremonies

The College of Our Lady of the Elms' 89th Commencement Ceremony, originally scheduled for May 16, has been postponed, President Harry E. Dumay recently announced.

"The decision to postpone graduation was a very difficult one to make, but the safety of the Elms community is our primary concern," said Dumay. "At the same time, we recognize the importance of acknowledging and celebrating the graduation of the Class of 2020, which we will do when it is safe for the Elms community to gather together in person."

College administration continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and when the restriction on physical distancing will be lifted, so that an in-person Commencement can be scheduled. Details will be announced as soon as they are determined.

For more information about Elms College, visit elms.edu.

Comp grad celebrated for excellence

HAMILTON, N.Y. – Colgate University recently announced Elisha Rudenko, of Chicopee, earned the school's Dean's Award for Academic Excellence during the fall 2019 semester. Rudenko, a member of the Class of 2021, is a graduate of Chicopee Comprehensive High School.

To earn the award, a Colgate student must earn a 3.30 GPA or better and complete at least three courses.

Legislature acts to allow virtual notarization during outbreak

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Senate and House passed legislation April 23 that authorizes notary publics to perform notary actions using video conferencing during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

State Sen. Eric P. Lesser, Senate chair of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, is leading a Senate subgroup working on an economic response to help individuals, businesses, and the Commonwealth.

"This legislation allows for notaries to be able to conduct business virtually and ensures their safety during this public health crisis," said Lesser. "The provisions in this bill enable vital legal transactions to continue to take place, giving families and individuals peace of mind, and allows this area of our economy to continue operating."

The legislation applies requirements for authorized notary publics to use electronic video conferencing for documents requiring notarization including those related to a mortgage or other conveyance of title to real estate, will, nomination of guardian or conservator, caregiver authorization affidavit, trust, durable power of attorney or health care proxy.

Provisions of the legislation, which will remain in place until three business days after the March 10 State of Emergency declaration is lifted, include authorizing notary publics to act using video conferencing in real time; makes valid notarial acts using video conferencing when the notary public and each principal are physically located within the Commonwealth as well as other provisions; and requires notaries to record and retain a copy of the video conference and related documentation for a period of 10 years.

The bill has advanced to the Governor's desk.

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Davis Foundation contributes \$500,000 to virus response

SPRINGFIELD – In response to the ongoing public health emergency surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the Iren E. & George A. Davis Foundation announced a grant of \$500,000 to the COVID-19 Response Fund for the Pioneer Valley.

Established by the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, the fund provides resources to area nonprofits serving populations impacted by the novel coronavirus.

To date, more than \$3 million has been raised locally to support the COVID-19 Response Fund.

"These are extraordinary times requiring that business and philanthropy in Western Massachusetts come together to address this unprecedented crisis and its impact on the people of our region," said Steven A. Davis, director of the Davis Foundation. "We applaud the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts for their leadership in establishing the COVID-19 Response Fund and are proud to provide these much-needed resources."

The Response Fund's grants support the region's most vulnerable populations including the elderly, those without stable housing, families in need of food and those with health vulnerabilities.

The fund has awarded more than \$1 million to roughly 30 nonprofit organizations. For more information visit communityfoundation.org/covid19.

To learn more about the Davis Foundation, visit davisfdn.org.

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Chicopee Register

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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$120, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

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Chicopee Register

Sports

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MIAA

Spring sports officially cancelled

Following the governor's closure of schools for the remainder of the year, spring sports will not happen

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – After weeks of speculation back and forth, the high school sports world got the sad news it had been dreading.

Last Friday, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association's Board of Directors was forced unanimously to cancel the spring sports season and associated tournaments.

It was a mere formality as Gov. Charlie Baker announced last Tuesday that schools in Massachusetts would remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic school year, which would have ended in mid to late June.

Baker held off for a few weeks on making the decision, hoping new coronavirus case numbers would decrease to the point where the state could begin opening up.

But as the "surge" in both new cases and deaths progressed, it became clear to Baker's administration that putting students in schools would not be a good situation. Additionally, the Massachusetts Teachers Association pushed for the closure of schools for the remainder of the year.

The closure of school means it is not possible for athletes to play sports, putting an end to the proposed shortened, 12-game season the MIAA was hoping to play beginning on May 4. The school closure was set to expire on that day before Baker made his announcement.

The announcement gives a definitive answer the question about whether or not seniors will have their final moments in many of their respective spring sports. The decision cancels baseball, softball, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, boys tennis, girls tennis, boys track, girls track, boys volleyball.

There are no proposals for any school sponsored sports to play during the summer, and athletic directors will now have to turn their attention to hopefully playing sports this fall, provided school resumes in September.

See MIAA page 8



FILE PHOTOS

Players from all over the region have participated in the Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League for more than 40 years. The league said last week it is closely monitoring the coronavirus situation, but is still hopeful the league will begin play on time in mid-June.

PVSSL

Summer soccer league optimistic for season

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

LUDLOW – In the advent of the high school sports spring season being cancelled and the lack of team sports being played all over the country, sights in Western Massachusetts have now begun looking at whether summer sports will be played.

Summer sports have ballooned over the years as a way to keep all athletes active during the summer months. In the past, there was only summer baseball and soccer. But basketball, field hockey, lacrosse, and even flag football have been added over time.

The Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League, however, nearly outlasts them all and is consid-

ered a crucial battleground for players that are vying for that competitive edge heading into the fall season.

The PVSSL has been in existence for more than 40 years, and there is some question as to whether or not the season will begin on time following the cancellations that have already occurred.

Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, which hosts the PVSSL finals in early August, is the home of the semi-pro Western Mass. Pioneers. However, their season has been cancelled.

The American Legion baseball program will not have a national tournament or a World Series. However, Legion officials

See SOCCER page 8



GOLF

Mass Golf cancels open event in June due to outbreak

NORTON – Mass Golf has made the decision to cancel the 111th Massachusetts Open, set to take place June 15-17 at Taconic Golf Club in Williamstown, due to the ongoing spread of COVID-19 throughout Massachusetts and the entire country.

All six Mass Open qualifying events have also been canceled, but any exemptions from this year will carry over and be honored for the 2021 Mass Open.

Participants who have registered have received an email detailing how refunds will be processed for the Mass Open and its qualifying events.

The Mass Open is the only Mass Golf event that allows

amateur and professionals from any state or country to enter and compete against one another. With a professional purse of \$75,000, the Mass Open offers one of the largest purses in the New England area.

The Four-Ball Championship was also canceled earlier this month, making the Mass Open the second of Mass Golf's Championships to be canceled this year. This also marks the first time since 1945 that there will be no Mass Open played, as the event was not held from 1943-45 due to World War II.

"We care deeply about this historic and signature championship and have made this decision with a heavy heart," said Jesse Menachem, Mass Golf's

Executive Director/CEO. "This is an unfortunate situation we're dealing with in the COVID-19 era, but our absolute priority is to protect the health and safety of the Players, Officials, Volunteers, and Spectators as well as the Host Club Staff and Mass Golf Staff involved in the Mass Open and its qualifying events. Taconic has been extremely supportive throughout this decision-making process and we are so appreciative of our long-standing partnership as well as their understanding and flexibility in what is truly an unprecedented time."

The Qualifying schedule was as follows: Pine Brook CC (May 7); CC of Pittsfield (May 13); Kernwood CC (May 18);

Ocean Edge R&CC (May 20); Pleasant Valley CC (May 26); and The Bay Club at Mattapoisett (May 28).

Oak Hill CC in Fitchburg will be the host site of the Mass Open in 2021. The club will be celebrating its centennial next year as well.

"We greatly appreciate the continued support of all our Mass Golf Member Clubs who were scheduled to host qualifying, as well as Taconic GC for their willingness to host the Championship," said Kevin Eldridge, Mass Golf's Director of Rules & Competitions. "We look forward to continuing this signature event in 2021."

See GOLF page 8

United Women’s Soccer still hopeful for 2020 season

LUDLOW – United Women’s Soccer (UWS) has reaffirmed its intent to play the 2020 season for both UWS and UWS League Two. The start of the season will be delayed in order to align with CDC guidance and we will work with all of our clubs to adjust the regular season schedule. The safety of our players, fans and staff remain our top priority and we will continue to monitor events and receive guidance from local, state, and national authorities.

“First and foremost, the safety of all the players, staff and supporters will guide any final decision on the 2020 season,” said League Commissioner Joseph Ferr-

ara Jr. “We have been working diligently on different scenarios based on potential timelines. UWS intends to provide a National Championship structure for our member teams as it is the most important service provided by the league. Our investment into this event has made it a tremendous showcase for women’s soccer.

The New England Mutiny participate in the UWS and has recently featured several star players from Western Massachusetts.

The USL-Two, a men’s semi-professional team, recently announced the Northeast Division cancelled its regular season.

Valley Wheel Over-30 Baseball looking for new players

REGION – The Valley Wheel Over-30 Baseball League is seeking new players for the upcoming 2020 season. The league is seeking players ages 28 and up. Players turning 28 this year are eligible. However, only players 30 and older can pitch. The league plays 15 regular season games with games being held mostly on Sundays with a couple of weekday games thrown in the mix as well as a special Mother’s Day Saturday game in early May. However, due to the current circumstances, the league schedule has been pushed back. The

league still plans to play its season once bans on gatherings are lifted. The league is built on comradery, fair play, and having a good time with friends. If interested in trying out, go to www.valleywheelbaseball.com. The rules of the league and new player forms can be found on the site. For further information, you can contact the league’s commissioner, Jim Nason at wheel12@comcast.net or call him at (413) 433-4308. Tryouts will be taking place in the early weeks of April, weather permitting, with a draft following the tryouts.

Sign-ups ongoing for Quabbin Over-30 Baseball League

REGION – The Quabbin Valley Over-30 Baseball League is seeking new players for 2020 season. The league has six teams, several with open roster spots. Last year, the league voted to allow players age 28 and 29 to be able to join the league, though players under 30 are not eligible to pitch. The cost of the league this season is \$192. For returning players, sign-ups are extended through May 1. New players can also sign up through this date with the draft currently set for May

2. The league hopes to begin play in early June. The season is 15 regular season games plus at least one playoff game. A modified schedule is being worked on by league officials. Games are nine innings and metal (BBCOR -3) or wood bats are allowed. Fields locations are throughout Western Mass. For more information on the league, or if you are interested in registering, go to <https://www.quabbin-valleybaseball.org/>. The league is also in Facebook.



CLUB from page 1

actions.” The club defers to the Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs on matters pertaining to state government.

In parts of the country, Boys & Girls Clubs are tending to the children of essential workers. Morrisette made it clear that similar action will not be legally permitted in Chicopee, as she circled back to the developments that she previously noted.

“At this time, we do not anticipate opening for essential workers’ children. Instead, we will focus on our dinner program as ways to help our current families, and our virtual programming to help not only our members but any youth in Chicopee,” said Morrisette.

Volunteer opportunities at the club are non-existent, but the community can help in other ways. The club values all monetary donations, no matter how small.

“They’re helpful to support the grab-and-go dinner programs, virtual programming and the re-opening of the facility when the time comes. The kids will be looking for time with their friends and mentors and we want to be able to give them all the support and programs they deserve,” said Morrisette.

A variety of local businesses continue to support the Club. Morrisette listed one such establishment as being the 99 Restaurant on Memorial Drive and thanked all of the local partners who contribute.



STAFF PHOTO BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

The Chicopee Boys & Girls Club’s atmosphere is typically loud and exuberant. During the pandemic, however, it sits quietly at all hours.

“Community is very important and we would not be able to accomplish what we do without many in our community,” said Morrisette. “So if we can support one of the many businesses that support us by suggesting our family, friends, parents and coworkers patronage them, that’s a small way for us to say thank you. We are all in this together!”

MIAA from page 7

In the MIAA announcement, they have made no mention or answered any questions about the status of fall sports. However, athletic directors in Western Massachusetts have begun developing fall schedules, expecting teams will be playing in early September.

The coronavirus first struck the end of winter sports on March 12, when the MIAA was forced to cancel the state finals in both hockey and basketball. Monson High School girls basketball played in the final state semifinal game, losing to Maynard in a Division 4 semifinal at Worcester State University with fans barred from the building. Maynard and other semifinal winners were deemed

“co-state champions” by the MIAA.

The spring season was set to begin on March 16, and was first postponed to March 30 as many schools closed down on their own for two weeks. Gov. Baker then shut schools down for three weeks until April 7. In a subsequent decision on March 23, athletics were postponed through April 27. Baker countered with a school closure extension through May 4. The MIAA followed suit with a May 4 starting date for spring sports, agreeing to a shortened season and only holding sectional playoffs that would have concluded before the end of June.

Unlike colleges, which granted athletes an additional year of eligibility for spring sports, seniors in high school will not have that option.

GOLF from page 7

Taconic was getting set to host the Mass Open for the second time, first hosting it in 1992 when Boston native Andy Morse took home the title. Taconic has also hosted three USGA Championships and four NCAA Championships in its storied history. Jack Nicklaus was 16 when he made the semifinals of the 1956 U.S. Junior Amateur, hosted by Taconic.

Taconic also hosted the Mass Amateur back in 2016, won by Brendan Hunter, of Red Tail GC.

Josh Hillman, the head golf pro at Taconic, said he’s disappointed that

COVID-19 has led to this cancelation of the Mass Open and other events, and he just wants to see Taconic get another shot at some point.

“Taconic will always be here for Mass Golf, and we hope to get another Championship on the schedule soon,” said Hillman, who was named the 2019 Northeastern New York PGA Golf Professional of the Year.

New Hampshire’s Michael Martel won the Mass Open last year by edging out Ryan Gendron (Tampa, Florida) by 1 stroke. In the process, he ended Jason Thresher’s three-year winning streak in the Mass Open.

SOCCER from page 7

do hope players will have a regular season, especially with the spring baseball season cancelled.

Chris Kolodziey, who along with his wife Diana, took over the PVSSL in place of his late father, league founder and legendary soccer contributor William Kolodziey, says they are monitoring the situation closely.

Unlike some other leagues, Dianna Kolodziey said last week there is some flexibility in holding the PVSSL season.

“We are not opposed to revising the start and end dates for the leagues, we are will continue to explore our options to get our players back on the field,” said Dianna Kolodziey.

The league typically begins play in mid-June and concludes during the final week of July with a playoff week following that.

PVSSL plays a 10 or 11-game regular season. The league is divided into four divisions, Division A boys, Division B boys, Division A girls, and Division B girls. Larger schools highly competitive or advanced smaller schools usually participate in Division A. Division B usually includes smaller schools or situations where a larger school has two teams.

Last week, Dianna Kolodziey placed a statement on the PVSSL website expressing the optimism of having a normal summer season.

“At this time we are keeping our hopes up and being optimistic that we will be able to move forward with the PVSSL this summer,” she stated. “Our plan is to have the a league



FILE PHOTOS

Players from all over the region have participated in the Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League for more than 40 years. The league said last week it is closely monitoring the coronavirus situation, but is still hopeful the league will begin play on time in mid-June.

for the summer. Chris and I along with our executive board is continuing to monitor the situation with the Corona virus (COVID-19) throughout our nation and around the world. While this is an evolving situation, we are taking the current situation seriously and are following developments very closely.

“We will continue to monitor the situation in real time and will provide a further updates in the near future. We apologize any inconvenience this may

have caused however, the safety of our PVSSL family is our highest priority.”

Dianna Kolodziey did not specifically say what steps would be taken if the season were to start, including modified rules for social distancing, and eliminating handshake lines after games like a number of sports plan to.

The Kolodzieys state they hope to hold registrations in early May. For more information, Kolodziey can be contacted at ckolodziey@msn.com.

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Feeling bored . . .

horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, others want to lure you into their shenanigans, but you don't need to worry about falling prey. You stick to your own ways of doing things.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, you may need to take a different and unusual approach to get things accomplished this week. Do not be afraid to take the bull by the horns if it is necessary.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

Thinking outside of the box is something that you do with frequency, Gemini. Although others may not be sure of your unconventional methods, you always get things done.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, anxiety about starting a new path or chapter in your life is completely normal. Look forward to all of the positive things that may be in store soon enough.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Lend a helping hand to someone who may need a vote of confidence or some words of support this week, Leo. Your efforts will be appreciated very much.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Make the most of luck that comes to you this week, Virgo. Do not speculate why such good fortune comes your way, but embrace it with an open heart.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Do not rush to judgment on any situation or person for the time being. All of the facts have not come to light or sharpened. But the truth will soon reveal itself, Libra.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, someone close to you needs space this week, so give them some room to breathe. Find a way to keep busy as this person works through what he or she needs.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, a competitive coworker is pushing hard to be on top. Use this as motivation as you to strive to become the best version of yourself you can be.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, you feel confident moving forward with a relationship after a heart-to-heart talk. Now this week you can cultivate this relationship even further.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Share your thoughts and feelings with someone who is unbiased if you want an accurate assessment of what you need to do to improve, Aquarius. A willing listener is quite helpful to you.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, you will need patience in spades this week. Others may not be able to maintain your pace, so give them the benefit of the doubt.

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to landscaping.

S A G S R

Answer: Grass

Guess Who?

I am a comic actress born in Texas on April 26, 1933. I once lived in a boarding house for women pursuing careers in acting. I have earned a Tony, Emmy and Golden Globe for my work in various genres.

Answer: Carol Burnett

YARD CARE WORD SEARCH

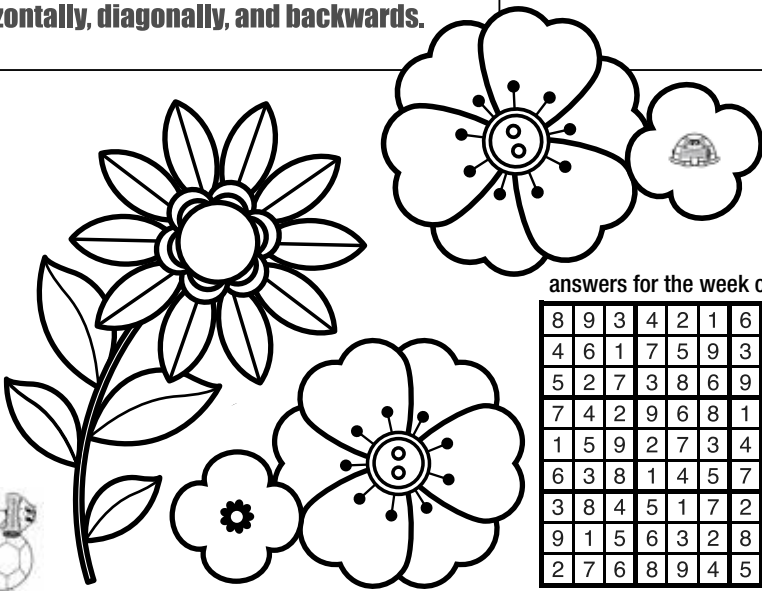
C P B L C F H T V A L A N D S C A P E V
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L N B W S D H P M M G C K V N C Z H R V
D F G N Y A P R A T N O B R A C T I L L

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

ACIDIC
AERATE
ALKALINE
AMENDMENTS
BEAUTIFY
BLADE
CARBON
COMPOST
DEADHEAD
FERTILIZE
GREEN
LANDSCAPE
LEAVES
MATTER
MOW
MULCH
ORGANIC
PEAT
PLANTINGS
PRUNE
SHRUB
SOIL
TILL
WATER

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answers for the week of 4/20

| | | | | | | | | |
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| 3 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 9 |
| 9 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 7 |
| 2 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 |

ANSWERS WILL BE IN NEXT WEEKS PAPERS

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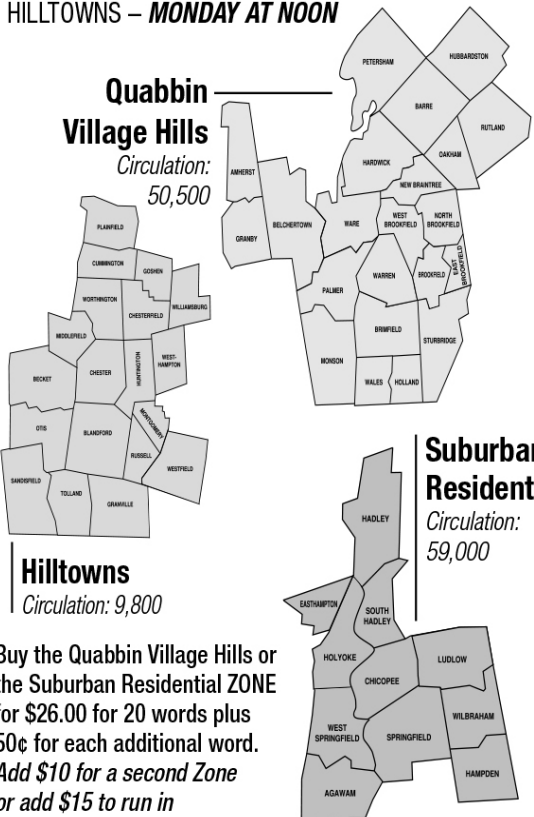
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| 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |

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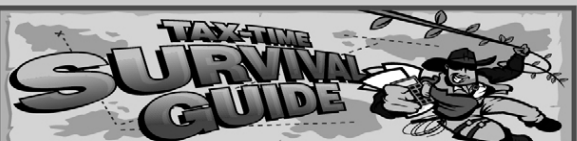
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FIRE from page 1

the profession because they are never exposed to the mere possibility.

"It's hard to aspire to be something that you don't see growing up. For them to know that the option is out there is very important. It would be great if one day it isn't such a big deal," said Therrien.

For the team, working together is a rarity. The trio teamed up by chance back in January but remain close.

The three firefighters genuinely praised their coworkers. Each woman emphasized that the department is a family and that everyone has each other's backs.

Members of the department hail from a number of different backgrounds. Brunetti, a lifelong Chicopee resident, recalled that their acceptance of her years ago helped her to thrive as a firefighter.

"I came into the job at 22-years-old; I was a young female and everyone was looking to see what I could do. At the beginning of my career I would tuck my hair in my helmet, I would never paint my nails; I tried to fit in as much as I could. After a few fire fires under my belt, it was like, 'Okay, I'm here; I can do it,'" said Brunetti, who ascended the ranks after building up her confidence.

"No one on the job has ever said anything negative to me; no one that I work with. I run the shift, and they respect me. Now, it's more of the outside people who get taken back, but for everyone who does that, there's more who say, 'This is amazing,'" said Brunetti.

Therrien explained that if a firefighter is trained and physically prepared, his or her gender does not matter. Performance speaks volumes.

"I just go in every day, put in the work and try to prove myself. If you can do the job, people will respect that, whether you're male or female. We have excellent leadership who want each person to be the best that they can regardless of if they're male or female," said Therrien.

While firefighting is inarguably a male-dominated profession, new female firefighters are finding success in departments across the country. One cannot predict the future, but Brunetti, Therrien and Stein are optimistic that the progression will continue.

"That would be the goal; if 15 or 20 years from now it's the norm for females to be firefighters. We don't see black, we don't see white, we don't see male and we don't see female. You're just a firefighter in uniform who is giving exactly what the next person is giving," said Brunetti.

BUSINESS

Turley Publications is liberal with regard to its business coverage policies, but we do have some standards folks need to understand. First, local businesses and merchants are just as much institutions in our towns as the library and schools. Without them, there are no towns.

We will feature coverage of local businesses that are new, have a major expansion, moving, closing, under new management or ownership, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or have been thrust into the news realm. Merchants can request that coverage through the editor, or for our existing advertising clients, through their ad representatives.

For more information on business coverage for The Chicopee Register, please email chicopeeregister@turley.com.



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Manufacturer to produce equipment for medical workers

EAST LONGMEADOW – Hasbro, Inc. a global play and entertainment company, and Cartamundi, a manufacturer of playing cards, trading cards and board games, recently announced plans to produce 50,000 face shields a week for front-line health care workers over the next several weeks. The personal protective equipment will be manufactured at the

Cartamundi facility in East Longmeadow and donated to local hospitals in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island, home to Hasbro's global headquarters.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to work together with our partners at Cartamundi to produce much-needed personal protective equipment, to directly assist the critical needs of front-line medical

workers in our community," said John Frascotti, Hasbro president and COO. "Throughout this challenging time, Hasbro is committed to using our brands, our resources and our expertise to help make a difference."

Cartamundi East Longmeadow has put in place specific protection measures for workers on the production lines in-

cluding medical screenings, temperature checks, PPE, plexiglass screens, distancing measures, separation and regular sanitization between shifts. They will continue to follow the strict guidelines and health measures recommended by the local and federal government and the World Health Organization.

Strong response for local business assistance

More than 20 small businesses have applied for funding through Chicopee's initial Emergency Business Assistance Fund of \$150,000, designed to provide immediate, short-term assistance to city businesses affected by COVID-19.

In a press release dated April 14, Mayor John Vieau said he was excited to receive federal support for the program and that Chicopee businesses would start receiving funds within

the coming days.

"I am please we were able to gain HUD approval of our program and mobilize quickly," Vieau said. "I am especially pleased that the first few businesses will be receiving their grant funds in the next few days."

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development informed the city it would receive an additional \$704,467 in Community Development Block Grant COVID

funds. To access the funding, the city must develop a plan on the proposed use of the money, solicit comment and gain HUD approval. Chicopee plans to allocate \$625,000 for business assistance. The city will use \$75,000 to support food pantry and other essential meal programs.

Comment may be submitted to the Office of Community Development at 413-594-1490 or by email to jdias@chicopeema.gov.

Area boutique supporting local nonprofits

SPRINGFIELD – Contribution Clothing, a Springfield-based online boutique, provides quarterly monetary donations to local nonprofits that empower women and girls, as well as community support, and now is working to provide a gift to the Care Center of Holyoke.

Contribution Clothing is working to provide 15 percent of net profits to the center, which helps support young mothers by giving them tools to learn and grasp how powerful they are.

In addition, the boutique has worked with Bay Path University to create the Contribution Clothing Scholarship Fund, providing \$500 toward tuition.

"I want Contribution Clothing to be more than an online boutique," said founder Kelly Partridge, "I want it to become a community of women that support, encourage and inspire each other to be better versions of themselves. Women can do anything and every single one of them needs to hear that and believe it."

Since launching in June of 2019, the boutique has supported such Western Massachusetts nonprofits as Unify Against Bullying, Dress for Success, Shriners, Safe Passage and Girls Inc. of the Valley.

For more information, visit contributionclothing.com.

Elms offers housing to Chicopee responders

To assist the community during the COVID-19 pandemic, Elms College will offer temporary housing to first responders housing from Chicopee, President Harry Dumay announced April 28.

Elms College will provide 20 rooms in Devine Hall to be used by the city of Chicopee for its police, fire and emergency medical personnel during COVID-19 response operations now through July 31.

All campus residents were required to move out of the residence halls

by April 1 as the college closed all housing through the end of the academic year in May. The college has moved its coursework online and college staff and faculty are all working remotely. With the exception of essential personnel such as those in public safety, the campus has been virtually empty.

Once Chicopee's first responders are no longer in need of this sanctuary, the building will be sanitized and cleaned by a professional company in time to reopen the campus.

We thought we would give you a quick update. First, we are happy to re-introduce weekly sales. We are cautiously optimistic that the market will slowly return back to its pre-Corona days. Until then our frozen items are proving to be the best value. We encourage you to give these items a try!

Second, we have posted throughout the store, on our website and on Facebook our health and safety rules. We kindly ask that you adhere to these in order to protect our customers and hard working staff. If you don't have access to or forgot your gloves no worries here! We are providing a pair of free gloves to each shopper as they enter the store. We are all in this together! Be well and stay safe!

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